30. The large-volume flexible container support system of claim 29, wherein the container hanger is connected to the large-volume flexible container at a location spaced substantially away from an upper corner of the large-volume flexible container.

31. The large-volume container support system of claim 29, wherein the container hanger is connected to the large-volume flexible container along a diagonal seam between about 35% and about 65% of a length of the seam measured from an outer corner of the large-volume flexible container.

32. The large-volume container support system of claim 29, wherein the container hanger further comprises a counterweight connected to the top portion of the large-volume flexible container.

33. The large-volume container support system of claim 29, wherein the container hanger further comprises an elastic member assembly connected to the top portion of the large-volume flexible container.

34. The large-volume container support system of claim 29, wherein the large-volume flexible container has a first perimeter in a substantially horizontal plane and the box has a second perimeter in the substantially horizontal plane, the first perimeter being greater than the second perimeter.

35. The large-volume container support system of claim 34, wherein the first perimeter is within a range of about 2% to about 10% larger than the second perimeter.

REMARKS

The Office Action was issued on pending claims 1-19. Claims 1-11 and 13-17 were withdrawn from consideration and claims 12, 18, and 19 were rejected. In this Response, claim 18 has been amended, claims 20-35 have been added, and claims 1-11 and 13-17 have been cancelled without prejudice. Thus, claims 12 and 18-35 are pending in the case.

On pages 2-4 of the Office Action, claims 1-11 and 13-17 were withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner as being drawn to non-elected inventions. Applicants affirm the election with traverse to prosecute the invention of group II, claims 12, 18, and 19. Accordingly, claims 1-11 and 13-17 have been cancelled without prejudice.

On page 4 of the Office Action, claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by UK patent publication 2,121,467 A to Mackiewicz et al. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 12 pertains to a hanger system for supporting a large volume flexible medical container in a rigid box. Claim 12 calls for a means for upwardly biasing a top portion of the flexible container. Accordingly, claim 12 calls for a means for upwardly biasing a top portion of the flexible container and not merely suspending the top portion of the flexible container.

The Office Action does not alleged that Mackiewicz et al. discloses the claimed means for upwardly biasing a top portion of the flexible container. Rather, the Office Action asserts that Mackiewicz et al. suspends a top portion of a flexible container. Applicants' claim 12 calls for a means for upwardly biasing a top portion of the flexible container and not merely suspending a top portion of the flexible container. For that reason alone, the §102(b) rejection should be withdrawn.

Furthermore, Mackiewicz et al. shows and describes a container or silo 2 for bulk materials which consist of a flexible bag suspended from a supporting frame 1. The silo 2 is suspended at its upper edges 3 from the supporting frame 1. See the specification of Mackiewicz et al. at page 2, lines 87-92 and Figs. 1-4. Referring to page 3, lines 49-51 of Mackiewicz et al., another silo 10 is provided with hangers 12 to suspend the silo 10 from a supporting frame. See Figs. 6 and 7. Accordingly, the Mackiewicz et al. silo is merely suspended from the supporting frame and not biased upward. Nowhere does Mackiewicz et al. disclose or suggest a means for upwardly biasing a top portion of the silo.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the §102(b) rejection of claim 12 has been overcome.

On pages 4 and 5 of the Office Action, claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Cox, Jr., U.S. patent number 3,117,695. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 18 pertains to a system for supporting a three-dimensional flexible container within a box. Claim 18 has been amended to clarify that the first perimeter of the flexible

container and the second perimeter of the box are along substantially the same path. One example of Applicants' claimed perimeters is described in the specification at page 17, lines 6-26 and shown in Figs. 22 and 23. The example of Fig. 22 shows the perimeter of the container and the perimeter of the box being along substantially the same path, for example, in a horizontal plane.

Turning to the Office Action and Cox, Jr., the Office Action asserts that Cox., Jr. discloses a flexible container having a first perimeter along a vertical plane and a rigid box having a second perimeter along a horizontal plane. Accordingly, the first and second perimeters referred to in Cox, Jr. do not occur along substantially the same path. Thus, Cox, Jr. does not disclose Applicants' claimed invention and the §102(b) rejection of claim 18 should be withdrawn.

On page 5 of the Office Action, claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cox, Jr. The Office Action asserts that it would have been an obvious matter of mechanical expedient to provide for a flexible container of a perimeter at 2-10% greater than the perimeter of the rigid box. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Applicants' container which is sized larger than the box provides advantages. Applicants' oversized container allows for some "play" with respect to the container within the box and can provide a certain amount of wrinkles in the container, preferably at the corners of the container and box. See the specification at page 17, lines 16-18. The structure of Applicants' container reduces the stress at the corners of the container. In a preferred embodiment, the perimeter of the container is about 2% to about 10% larger than the perimeter of the box. This amount of oversize for the container has been found to reduce stress on the container when in the box. See the specification at page 17, lines 18-26. Accordingly, the claimed range of the container perimeter being larger than the box perimeter in claim 19 is not merely an obvious matter of mechanical expedient.

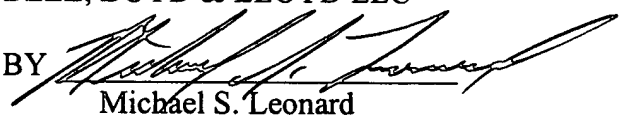
Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the §103(a) rejection should be withdrawn.

New claims 20-35 have been added. Applicants submit that the new claims are fully supported by the application as originally filed and do not include new matter. Applicants further submit that claims 20-35 are allowable.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

BY 

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Dated August 15, 2002

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

COPY OF PAPERS ORIGINALLY FILED

In the Claims:

18. (Amended) A system for supporting a three-dimensional flexible container within a box, the flexible container having a first perimeter and the box having a second perimeter along a substantially same path as the first perimeter, the first perimeter being greater than the second perimeter.